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L E T T E R *h*

FROM A

M E M B E R

OF THE

MARINE SOCIETY.

SHEWING THE

Generosity and Utility

OF THEIR

D E S I G N.

ADDRESSED to all TRUE FRIENDS
of their COUNTRY.

1757

THE SOCIETY.



OF THE COUNTRY.

T O T H E

True Friend of his Country.

THERE is no Character which I honor and respect so sincerely as I do yours. Whether *out* of Office or *in* it, you appear to me in the same Light, and possess that within yourself which no Power on Earth can give, or take away. If the Love of our Country includes every social Duty, integrity of Heart must be one essential Part of it. Happy if we could teach each other, not only to think, but to act as if we thought, the Poet's Aphorism strictly true. So far at least as we are conversant with the Works of the *Creation*, it appears that

“ *An honest Man's the noblest Work of God!* ”

I am conscious of my own Insignificancy as to the Power of doing good, but for the same Reason that the Heart is the best Offering, I would not check my Inclination to promote the Service of my Country. In this Pursuit I am sorry to find myself *foolishly anxious*, or *puerilely timorous* : so it must needs be, or

some of my Friends and Acquaintance are not *sensible* of the true Situation of their Country ; they do not conceive so highly of the Power of their Enemies, as Reason and Experience seem to exact of us.

I remember it was the common Cry, the beginning of last year, “ *What can the French do?*” May we not with greater Propriety now ask, “ *What can they not do?*” Their *artful* Insinuations to other States, as if *our Ambition* was boundless : their *seeming* Reluctance to come into the War ; the stubborn Silence they long kept, joined to their mysterious Inactivity, were Presages of *deep* Designs. It is beyond dispute, that they have long beheld with envious Eyes the Bounties which Heaven has bestowed on this Nation, and are watchful of Opportunities to ravish them from us. It is very plain from the Beginning of the Affair, that they meant to correct the Errors they committed in the last War, and in spite of our superior Naval Strength, to play a *great Game*. In the mean while, if we have been *weak*, or inattentive in some Instances, we have certainly been *unfortunate* in others ; and we have seen that the *French* are Skilful and Active : Artful in Contrivance, vigilant in Execution. The extraordinary Efforts they
now

now make to increase their Naval Strength, and their actual Augmentation of it, are Circumstances which *call aloud for all our Attention.*

In spite of the Accidents which happened in the last War, we triumph'd in the *Mediterranean*. Instead of *losing ground*, our Commerce to *Turkey* was recovered; and the *British* Flag was displayed in every Part of those Seas. Alas, what is the Case now! What Trade shall we be able to carry in that Quarter of the World, during the War?

It is the Property of great Minds, to grow big, in proportion to the Difficulties they have to struggle with; and at length it has pleased Divine Providence by *your* Assistance to give us *one Chance more*: it still appears as if it was meant to convert our *Losses* into *Gain*; and if we do not oppose the Will of Heaven, I hope it will be so. Measures to which not one in fifty would have submitted twelve Months ago, are adopted now as the *only* Means of saving this *sinking Land*. But I must *repeat*, that a great Part of this Nation do not *yet* appear to be sensible of their real Danger: they still talk of *Profits* and *Pleasures*; and, without reflecting on the *Means* of obtaining these Goods, amuse themselves with fond Conceits of *private*, and *national* Felicity,

Felicity, which seem very *precarious*, and may be lost for ever, if we do not exert ourselves in *every* Shape.

This War was begun as if we thought our Enemies *would* not, or *could* not show their Resentment. It did not *seem* to be begun in *earnest*, but as if we meant to *husband* it, upon a moral Certainty of being great *Gainers* by its being spun out; whereas for my own Part I am more and more persuaded, if we do not make it *our chief*, I was going to say, *our only Object*, we shall in the Issue be great *Losers* indeed! We must regard all other Considerations as subservient to one great End, and in every dubious Case let the *martial* Scale preponderate. Even our darling Trade had better be suspended for a *short Time*, than lost *for ever*.

As in common Life, he who would have *Friends*, must not appear to be in great Need of them, the strengthening our Alliances can arise only from the superior Genius of the Nation over all the Difficulties we have to encounter.

My Voice is for War; *for War in earnest*:
Heaven knows that my Heart bleeds for the
Widow

Widow and the Orphan: but will not a vigorous Prosecution of the War lessen the Number of Widows and Orphans, and prevent that national Poverty and Distress which must otherwise ensue? Let us supply, by a *public Spirit* those Advantages which absolute Power gives, in the *Direction* and *Execution* of the Affairs of War, otherwise it will be Madness to contend. We must in the Issue become *Slaves* to ourselves, or to a foreign Enemy. But a free People, who are *really* such, tho' they may *perish*, if so is the Will of Heaven, yet they never can be *conquered*. We see our Enemies will *humble us*, if we do not humble them: but can we either *conquer*, or prevent our own *Destruction*, without an immediate Exertion of all our Strength; without using *all* the *Means* which Providence has put into *our Hands*?

Such was the Reasoning which induced me to subscribe to a Scheme, which I imagined might be rendered of great Service to the Public, and worthy the Consideration of the *greatest*, as well as the *meanest* Subject. The Society is composed of some of the prime *Nobility* and Gentry; of the first *Citizens* and most eminent Merchants and Tradesmen: and because it is intended to be of general Utility,

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no *Mechanic* or *Labourer* is excluded: it is calculated to take in the *whole*.

The Objects of the Society are the removing of those who are pernicious to the Community; to encourage the *industrious Poor*; and particularly to assist the *Captains* and *Officers* in the Sea Service with stout Lads, as *Servants*. This must appear of great Utility, when it is considered that a 60 Gun Ship of 400 Men, the Captain and Officers require about 30 Servants; and this Number is allowed, and considered as necessary to the Ship, as well as an excellent Nursery for Seamen. It is proper however to inform you, that, except it be Officers Sons, no Clerk of the Cheque can muster Boys under the Age of 13, and if a Boy is stout of his Years, clean limb'd, and robust in Constitution, this may be considered as the best Time of Life to go to Sea. *Young Gentlemen*, as well as those who do the Drudgery of a Boy's Office, are all included in this Number, and under the common Denomination of *Servants*. It does not seem proper, *in Time of War*, that above half this Number, including such Gentlemen and Officers Sons, should be of this *tender Age*, not only because they cannot arrive to Years and Strength to be rated as *ordinary Seamen*, even during a War of four or five Years,

Years, but that they cannot create a *quick Succession*. As soon as they become *able* to do the Duty of *ordinary Seamen*, and are rated as such, there is room for other Lads to take their Place, and upon this Principle half a Dozen Lads of 17, may become Seamen in less Time than one Boy of 13. Hence it is very obvious, besides the immediate Duty, which a stout Lad is capable of doing more than an *Urchin*, the Service must be promoted by encouraging stout *Lads* to enter as *Servants* on board his Majesty's Ships.

It is a great Mistake that some People have fallen into, that the *Society*, which I am now recommending, does no Service to the *Boys*, but only to the Captains and Officers. The contrary must appear, when it is considered that the Boys having no more than 40 or 50s. a Year allow them by their Masters, it cannot be presumed that they will have the *less Pay* for coming on board the Ships with *Bedding, and well clad*. It is confessedly to the Advantage of an Officer to be supplied with Servants, whom he sometimes cannot find; and in such Case he loses their Wages, which is considered *by an established Rule* as Part of his Pay. This Regulation is calculated to encourage Officers to breed up Boys from those early

Stages of Life, which must necessarily render them the more accomplished Seamen, supposing a proper Choice is made of them, as to their *Make* and *Constitution*.

And here I must take the Liberty to observe, that I think it would tend much to promote the *Service*, if the breeding up Boys were more strictly attended to; and that *Hospitals* where they are educated at the public Expence, should be under some Regulation with regard to the Obligation of Parents to send such Children to Sea, if required. Above all here seems to be a noble Field to exercise the *Humanity* and *Patriotism* of the Navy Officers, who are charged with the Care of these young Persons. The good Officer considers them as a wise and tender Parent does his own Children; he sees them taught the Duty of a *Christian* as well as a *Seaman*; he keeps them tight in their *Clothing*, and *clean* in their Persons, and properly treated by his *Crew*. If it ever happens that Boys are not regarded, they must become with respect to a Ship's Company, what Lice and *small Vermin* are to a human Body. If they are of a very tender Age, they will become a *Nusance*, and generate *Infection* and *Disease*.

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In this light of providing for so many young Persons, the Society considered themselves of Advantage to the Public: but those who see the Boys in Rags and Filth, and complicated Misery, such of them as are found in this abject State, the sending them *clean* as well as *clothed* on board his Majesty's Ships, must be considered as a noble Charity. If to this we add the Regard which the Society is known to show them, it must recommend them in a more particular Manner to the Humanity and Attention of the Commanders and Officers whom they are to serve. Those who were a Bane to Society being rendered valuable Subjects, must make Impressions on the good Subject and benevolent Heart.—I would not be understood all this Time, but that my Object, so far as I have a Voice in this Society, is for *stout Lads*, and as few as possible of a different Kind, and my Reason for it is plainly this, that such will soon become excellent *Recruits* for the Navy, which ought to be the great Point in View.

However worthy these Considerations may appear, it is but the least Part of the *Plan*. As I saw from the Situation of our Navy, that our *Trade* must *suffer*, or our *naval Strength* be *overwhelmed*, for want of a sufficient Number of Seamen; my prime Object, when I

became a Member of this Society, was the Encouragement of *Landmen*, who might soon be taught the *Duty* of *Seamen*. Indeed I did not think a less Object than this would engage the Attention of so many eminent Persons, of all Ranks and Degrees, as were concerned in it.

Never was there a more *urgent*, or a more *glorious* Occasion, to exert ourselves, than the present! Whatever is *permitted* by a Legislature, in a well regulated Government, is supposed to be *beneficial* to that *Government*; and upon the *whole*, more proper to be conducted in such a Manner, than in any other: and whatever is done for the *public* Service, becomes public, tho' private Men are *permitted* to support it.

If a Nobleman or Gentleman was to offer his Service to raise in a certain Manner, 10,000 Men for the Use of the Navy, and he was previously assured, by the Government, that such Men would be accepted, no Minister, no Magistrate could with any consistency object to such a Measure, merely because the Money did not come out of the *public Purse*. But if this happened at a Time when the very being of a Nation depended on a parsimonious Use

Use of the Public Treasure, the Reasons for it would receive an additional Weight, and the true Guardians of the Public Welfare, would be most forward to promote every private Scheme of so useful a Tendency.

We have seen Men commissioned at a vast Expence, by the *Public*, to perform a *Public Business*, without *doing* any thing: shall we object to a *private Society*, which is really doing an *important Service* to the Public, without any Expence at all? But if this can be done in a Manner that intrudes on no *established Form* of Business, but is intirely correspondent with it, all Arguments on account of *Public Authority* fall to the Ground.

Such I apprehend is the Case of the *Marine Society*, for the commissioned *Regulating Captains* are not only of the Society, and worthy Subscribers to it, but the Authority with which they are invested, for entering and raising of Men for the Public Service, remains in full Force: the Society only Clothe such Men as are approved by these Captains.

It has been a Complaint, and I am afraid better founded than need be insisted on, that we really want *People* to carry on War. If

this be true, there is an additional Reason derived from it to make a *proper Choice* of Men, that by their *Strength, Agility, and Fire*, they may supply the Want of Numbers. But our Power of chusing Men will depend on the Encouragement those meet, out of whom we are to chuse.

In our Ships of War, a certain Number of Men is wanted, and no more, and these cannot be recruited till the Ships come into Port. How fatal may be the Consequence of neglecting to make a *proper Choice*! We may become our own Executioners; and plunge a Dagger into the Breast of our *common Parent*. If there is not a *proper Choice*, we shall destroy that Distinction on which our truest hopes of *Superiority* is founded. We may as well *Women* our Ships, instead of *Manning* them, if we send on board them a puny crew of Mortals, who create the same Expence, and consume the same Quantity of Provisions. If for the *Parade*, or even the common *Drudgery* of Life, we choose a *stout Man*, how much more to discharge the *important Duties* of the *Day of Battle*! Behold the *hardy Mariner*, bleeding with glorious Wounds, still maintaining his Charge! See the *puny Creature*, however well disposed, fainting when his Finger bleeds!

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But supposing he has never so much Fire and Spirit, he can have no Weight in the *expeditious Movements* of a Thirty-two Pounder, on which the Event of the Day may depend.

Men of *Education, Honor and Sentiment*, may be near the same in all *European Countries*; though I hope *our Officers* will soon convince the World, that they enjoy many Advantages over the *French*. But if we consider our *common Men*, are not our *best*, our *truest* hopes, founded on their being *hardy and robust*? When *properly chosen*, are they not animated with a *superior Strength, Activity and Fire*, to the *French*? Nor is it only in their *Fighting*, but also in their *working a Ship*: What VOLTAIRE calls *le scavant manœuvre des matelots Anglois*, still depends on a *Choice* of men. I have dwelt the longer on this Thought, from having heard Magistrates and Gentlemen complain, that tho' the *Service* is in such want of Men, several who have been sent by them to *enter*, were rejected; which occasioned their drawing Conclusions which could not be reconciled upon any common Principle. I suppose the Truth is, they were what Officers call, *bad Men*.

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I lay it down as a Principle, that if it is meant to carry on the War with *Vigor*, that a great *Number* of *Men* will be wanted for the Sea Service; and that we shall not find *Seamen* sufficient, though a great Part of our Trade should be really suspended. But I am equally persuaded we shall find *Landmen*, yet in the *docile* Part of Life, brisk, active, and robust, who can well supply their Place; and nothing can be so well calculated as this design to prevent the Stagnation of *Trade*, and the destructive Effects of *War*, at one and the same time; especially if such *Landmen* are immediately clothed *as Seamen*, and so divided among the *Messes* of Seamen, as to learn their *Language* and *Duty*.

The King now gives a Bounty of *Three Pound* to *Seamen*, and *Thirty Shillings* to *Landmen*: More can hardly be given the *Former*, to produce its *proper Effect*; nor yet to the *Latter*, to support the Distinction which there must be, between *Seamen* and *Landmen*. I hope they will *all* make their Fortunes by the *Spoils* of the Enemy, or be contented with their Wages, if it should happen otherwise: but *Landmen* can be rated only as *ordinary Seamen*, and these have somewhat less Wages than *able Seamen*:

Seamen. If we consider also the Importance of having the *Choice* of Men, which I have insisted on, ~~some~~ *additional Encouragement* should be added to the 30s, *early*, and in good Time; and what can this so properly be, as a *Change* of *Raiment*? And by *whom* can it be so properly given, as by the *Marine Society*?

Experience already proves the Efficacy of such a *new Kind* of Bounty to engage Men to come into the Service, and to preserve their Lives when they are come in. Private Benevolence, bestowed as a Mark of *good Will* or Esteem, has some flattering Properties which a public Bounty has not; and Men are naturally *pleased* with it. But if they can receive *one* and the *other*, each will engage their *Attention* the more; and they will find themselves the more strongly tempted to *enter freely*. Besides, the Clothing proposed to be given is *good* and proper of its Kind, and may be yet *improved*, with a *trifling* additional Expence: It is already much superior to what is publicly supplied, and sold to them, on account of their Wages.

Whilst Ministers are labouring to employ the *public Treasure*, in such a Manner as is best calculated to prevent the Ruin of their
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Country, it can hardly be expected they will enter upon *new Projects*, where Money is required, unless it should appear to them, that it *must* be done, and *will be done* in no other Way. Besides, a private Society may go as far, and no farther than they please, and yet give no just Occasion of Offence. Upon the whole, will it not be for the immortal Honor of any Society to co-operate with *such Ministers*, in a Duty of such vast Importance? And may we not flatter ourselves, that *you* will be of our Number? As a true Friend to your Country, *you* will not be ingenious to seek for Reasons, to with-hold the *proper Marks* of that Friendship; but rather enter with Zeal and Spirit, and recommend the Design to *others*, who may be yet unacquainted with its Utility. Things may be done with a *little Money*, when Men in their private Stations, instead of *contriving Means* to *pillage* a State, are anxious to lend their Assistance for the *Support* and *Defence* of it.

A Society composed of the *highest* and *lowest*, of both Sexes, of all Parties and Complexions; triumphing over all *little Passions*, and *private Animosities*; actuated by *one common Spirit*, operating with Men in the *highest Offices*, and for their common Interest in Time of *Danger*, must
give

give our *precarious Friends*, as well as our *avowed Enemies*, such an Idea of our *national Spirit*, as will in its Consequences abundantly repay the trifling Expence it will create: whilst those Individuals, who are most forward to lend their *Assistance* to *save* their Country, will not only enjoy the Applause of their *own Hearts*, but be also entitled to the Praise and Thanks of those who will partake of the Good resulting from it.

There is a certain Generosity which no *mercenary* Consideration can inspire, that must be the ruling Principle of such a Society. If it is properly *encouraged*, this will certainly become of much greater Importance than has been yet generally thought. What are we all but one great *Family*, whose *Sovereign* is their common Parent? What *Interest* have we but to *support* each other? Our peculiar Circumstances, at this Time, render *Unanimity* essential to our very *Being*. Our particular Situation renders such a Society one of the most proper Things in the World to be encouraged.

I really think the *Marine Society* may be a great Means of bringing *eight or ten thousand* Men into the Service, who would not otherwise be brought so soon, or not at all with-

out *Compulsion*: perhaps not without being dragged by Violence from their Wives and Children, their Plow or their Shuttle; though hitherto it has never been practiced to force *Landmen* into the Sea Service as *Seamen*. Who would bestow a single Thought at the parting with *ten* or *twenty* Guineas for *such* a Purpose? This can be no Object to Men of *Fortune*, or to Men of *no Fortune*, if they have but *Food* and *Raiment*, much more if they have Money to spend in their *Diversions*. But the *Subscription* has no Limitation; be it *little* or *much*, *with* or *without* a Name, it is accepted. The Imputation of *Novelty* can be no Objection to it; since it is evident that only *new Measures* can save us from the Ruin which hangs over our Heads. But if we look back only eleven Years, we shall see almost the same Thing done, though not to so great an Extent, or to the same Purpose. In different Shapes the same Thing has been done a *thousand* Times.

What gives me the higher Impressions of this Society, is, that several of its Members are *active*, and particularly Mr. *Fielding*, in collecting the *Boys*: they assist and relieve each other, in a Task by which they are to *gain nothing*, but the Applause of their own Hearts; and by which neither the Subscribers, nor the
Public,

Public, can be imposed upon, unless it is imagined that *Lords* and *Gentlemen*, *Citizens* and *Merchants*, *Tradesmen* and *Mechanics*, will combine to *rob* a poor Man of that Clothing which is to encourage him to come into the *Service*, to protect him from the Inclemencies of the Weather, and to preserve his Health to *fight* our Battles.

Of what vast Consequence, *good* and sufficient Clothing is to Seamen, every *humane*, every experienced Officer will testify with *uplifted* Hands. Many a Life might have been saved, had *this Society* been established two Years ago; supposing that Numbers who *could* not provide themselves before they went on board Ship; and Numbers who were *negligent* of themselves, when they might have taken up Clothing on account of their Wages, and were as thoughtless, as Seamen too often are.

With respect to the Distinction of *Seamen* and *Landmen*, the Utility of Clothing is set in a very fair Point of View, by the Extract of a Letter which I have lately received from one of the Captains in his Majesty's Navy. He says, " the latter End of last War I entered a great
" Number of *Landmen*, but I found great Diffi-
" culty

“ culty to get the *Seamen* to mix with them,
 “ while they wore their *Land Clothing*; I there-
 “ fore desired every Landman to trust me with
 “ 30s. of the first Prize Money he should be
 “ entitled to, which happened to be paid soon
 “ after, and I employed my Taylors to make
 “ them such Clothing as our best Seamen were
 “ most pleased with. The Distinction between
 “ *Seamen* and *Landmen* immediately ceased;
 “ and those very Landmen became Seamen in
 “ one third of the Time they would otherwise
 “ have done.” This is the candid Account of
 a very honest Man, a brave and experienced
 Officer; and which I know can be supported
 by those who are much his Superiors in Rank,
 and whose Knowledge and Valour have been
 often signalized.

There is yet another Reason why I am a
 warm Advocate for this Society, abstracted
 from my being a Member of it. I see what
 can be done, for a trifling Expence. The *Trea-*
surer, Commissioners, Secretary, and Clerks; the
House-rent, and Entertainments; the *Fire,*
Candle, Paper, Pens, and Ink, cost a little
 less than *One Hundred Pounds* per Annum.
 If by an additional Clerk it should happen
 to swell to *One Hundred and Fifty Pounds,*
 greater Good, with less Money, I will be
 bold

bold to say, is not done by any Society, in *this* Kingdom. May I not therefore invite *You* into the Number of our *truly honorable Society*? May I not *desire* you will speak of it in honorable Terms, such as you *think* it deserves?

For my own part, I have no *Passion* for it, nor *Interest* in the Success of it, but as my Zeal leads me to wish well to my Country; and in this Light I think it worthy even of the *supreme Magistrate* himself, who is the *greatest*, as he is the *first* Friend to his People. He has the Interest of his brave Seamen at Heart, therefore I hope this Society will be *recommended* to him: I am confident it *deserves* to be recommended. It is no *visionary Project*, but a *real* and *substantial* Good, the Utility of which is already proved. It encourages those valuable Men, who are yet Novices in a *Sea Life*, and yet engage to *buffet* the *Winds* and *Waves* as well as the *French*. And if the *French* themselves have not *taught* us to carry on War in *earnest*, surely we had better at once submit to an *inglorious* and *shameful* Peace!

If to this Scheme of Benevolence in clothing of *Landmen*, the *Admiralty* or *Navy-Board* will improve that of Seamen on board
his

his Majesty's Ships, as I am told they intend to do.—If the good and ingenious Dr. *Hales's* Ventilators are introduced in all our Ships of War, as is already done in some of them.—If no *undue* Influence screens the wicked, no Wretch will be so execrably impious as to supply bad Provisions for the Seamen, when a Price is allowed for good. If the destructive Use of *Malt Spirits* is abolished in our Ships, and the Men no longer suffered to *poison themselves* with Gin.—If to *complete* the whole, the Captains will order their Men into *Classes*, under the Inspection of their Officers, that no Man be dirty or ragged, nothing but Lead or Iron will be able to destroy our brave Seamen. If to this the Parliament will make it *penal* for any one to buy Clothes of a Seamen actually in the King's Pay, though he should be so *indiscreet* as to offer them to Sale.—If these *practicable Works* are done, then may we hope to *convince* our Seamen, in Spite of all their *Prejudices* and *bad Habits*, not only that we really mean to *preserve* them, but that we love and respect them as we ought.

There is Reason to flatter ourselves, that when Oeconomy in Externals is introduced, and *Rules* more strictly observed, the Duties of Religion will follow. I am afraid in this
last

last Instance, I fear the *Officers* are *more* in Fault than the *Men*. But if Religion is really considered, it is surprizing how it comes about, that Preachers of the Gospel are so little sought for in our Ships; for whilst a Village which has fifty Inhabitants, Women and Children included, is not left without the Means of reminding them of the *Being of a God*, yet we too often see six hundred *brave Men* whose Fate may depend on a Plank, or a Cannon Ball, show very few external Marks of their Dependence on that Being, who can *still* the raging of the Waves, and who most certainly presides over the Day of Battle.

If we would really engage Heaven on our Side: if we *believe* that the Almighty can stretch forth his Arm, to *save* or to *destroy*, let us *change our Measures* on the *Water*, as well as upon *Land*. If he can disperse the *Mist*, or *still the Storm*; if he can *strengthen* the *Understandings* and *animate* the Hearts of Men, to do their Duty, in the Day of Battle: if we *desire to conquer*, let us prostrate ourselves before *him*; let us adore *his Power*!

Nor ought we to fear if we do our Duty to each other, our Seamen will ever be wanting. Instead of *flying* from the Service, they will

court it, whilst their native Valour and Generosity always leads them to fight, not like *Devils*, but like *Men*, Men whom the greatest Terrors cannot intimidate, and who resolve to *conquer* or to *die*.

I hope this happy Time is approaching. The Business is already begun, and some Parts of it almost executed. Many other good Things are intended, which I trust no Machinations will be able to disconcert, should there be amongst us so perverse a Creature, in human Shape, who would rather obstruct the Welfare of the whole Community, or rejoice at its Misfortunes, than submit to give up those Advantages which cannot be enjoyed without the Ruin of their Country.

I hope those Days are past, in which *public Interest* was too often subservient to *private Gain*, and Men thought it *better* for them to be *rich* than to be *honest*. Let those Days be forgotten, as if they never had been. Let us hope for the best, and look forward. All may be well again. Whilst Policy and Humanity act in Confort with each other, if we fail of *earthly Felicity*, we may still look forward to that Country, where all is *peaceful, calm, and serene!*

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The Prosecution of the Design I am now recommending to you is equally *humane* and *political*. And it seems to be a plain Duty, incumbent on all Persons whose Situations admit of it, to exercise their Humanity *in Time of War*, even to their *Enemies*, when in their Power, much more to their *fellow Subjects* who fight for them: and it is certain no Encouragement can tend more to keep the Crews of Ships in Health, than proper and sufficient Clothing. Seamen, as I have observed, are apt to be as *careless* as they are *brave*; and many a Life has been lost for Want of Raiment. Since we are *obliged* to try the Length of our Swords with a *formidable Enemy*, let us alleviate the Miseries of War as much as possible. What can bid so fair to answer this happy End, as making the greatest Augmentation possible of the *maritime Force* of these Kingdoms, and strengthening the Hands of Government in *every Shape*?

I hope this Scheme, among many others, will be a *means* of restoring the *faded Glories* of this Land. I trust it will be *one* of the *Means*, of restoring *Honor* and *Strength*; *Safety*

and *Plenty*, to this once *happy* Isle; to dry
Brittannia's Tears, and *cheer* her drooping
Sons!

I am with the greatest

Sincerity and Respect,

Your most *obedient*, and as

one of the COMMUNITY

to which you are a *Friend*,

Your most *obliged* Servant,

A Member of the MARINE SOCIETY.

John's Coffee-house,

Jan. 26, 1757.

P. S.

P. S. 29th *January*.

I Have the Pleasure to acquaint you that by Advices received from the *Nore*, several of the Lads the Society has equipped and sent to Sea, are already become Seamen; and certainly, the stout ones will supply the Place of those whom Time, and a *vigorous Prosecution* of the War must take off. And as there is no national Provision or Encouragement for such Purposes, the Society has the greater Claim to the Assistance of those who are attentive to the Interest of their Country, and desirous to see a dangerous War brought to a happy Issue. Gentlemen in the Country being advised that stout Lads of 15 or 16 will be accepted, such whose Hands are useless, or whose Heads are turned to War, are sent to the Society; and by this Means the Society helps to diffuse an active, benevolent, a martial and concordant Spirit, which is now become so essential to our very Being.

The greatest Care imaginable is taken that no Master, Mistress, or Parent has any Reason to complain: they are invited to see the Boys when they are clothed, on *Thursday* Mornings at Mr. *Fielding's* House, and again when they are examined by the Society, at their Office at the *Seamen's Office* over the *Royal Exchange*;
and

and if any 'Prentice or Son is required, he is delivered up immediately.

The Men and Boys are examined by a Surgeon, and if any are distempered, and otherwise unfit to be sent on board Ship, after being entered are sent to St. *Thomas's* Hospital to be cured, by which Means some Lives are saved in the very first Instance.

The Method which the Society takes, is to keep a Sample of the Clothing, at their Office, which is sealed with the Seals of several of the Committee, and shewn to the *Men*. Their Secretary also attends the Men and Boys when they are clothed, that the Society may be sure the Slopeller keeps up to his Engagement. Moreover, as it is the steady Purpose of the Society to preserve the Health of the *Men* and *Boys*, whom they clothe, so far as it may depend on such Raiment, they are not contented with such Manufactures as they find in the Shops, but buy them of the Manufacturer in *Yorkshire*, which being well wetted on the Spot, make Pee Jackets which will last twice as long, and resist Weather four Times as much as the common sort of Pee Jackets. And because they think the Severity of the Winter Season renders common thin Flannel Waist-

coats

coats insufficient, they make Waistcoats of white or other coloured Kersey, which is of great Substance and Duration. The Breeches or Drawers for the Men and Boys are made of *Half-thicks* or *thin Kersseys*, which the Society also provides directly from *Yorkshire*. In order also to make the most of the Money, and provide the best Things, these Jackets, Waistcoats and Breeches are brown, instead of blue, the former being found the most durable Colour, and such Jackets cost ten *per Cent.* cheaper than blue, on account of the excessive Price of Indigo; but this is alterable at Pleasure.

The Charge and Regulation of the Society.

Exclusive of the Clothing, and the Charge of sending Boys to *Portsmouth*, the Expence is very little more than the Rent of Rooms at about twenty-five Pounds *per Annum*: the Salary of a Secretary not exceeding fifty Pounds *per Annum*; and a Porter ten Pound *per Annum*.

The Officers and Committee chosen to act for one Year, from July last, are

The Treasurer is *John Thornton, Esq;*

The Secretary, Mr. *John Stephens*, whose Office is to see that the Clothes be delivered to
the

the Men and Boys at the *proper* Place; to keep the Accounts of the Society; and what else the Society shall require.

There will be a *general Meeting*, every three Months, *viz.* first *Thursday* in *October*, first in *January*, first in *April*, first in *July*, or oftner if the Committee desire it, when an Account of Receipts and Disbursements will be laid before the Subscribers, under the Direction of the *Committee, viz.*

Slingsby Bethel, Esq;	John Tucker, Esq;
Sir John Barnard	Capt. Bollard
Sir Robert Ladbroke	John Fielding, Esq;
Sir Joseph Hankey	Robert Jones, Esq;
Sir Charles Asgill	Joseph Watkins, Esq;
Francis Gosling, Esq;	Edmund Boehm, Esq;
Sir Joshua Van Neek,	John Major, Esq;
Bart.	Andrew Thomson, Esq;
The Right Hon. Alex.	Thomas Spencer, Esq;
Hume Campbell Lord	Joseph Mellish, Esq;
Register of Scotland.	James Mathias, Esq;
Digby Dent, Esq;	George Peters, Esq;
Samuel Mead, Esq;	Josiah Hardy, Esq;
Edward Hooper, Esq;	William Wilberfore,
William Wood, Esq;	<i>jun.</i> Esq;
Thomas Ducket, Esq;	Christopher Noble, Esq;
John Tomlinson, Esq;	James Henckell, Esq;
Barlow Trecothick, Esq;	Thomas Walker, Esq;
	John

John Thornton, Esq;	William Mayne, Esq;
Samuel Touchet, Esq;	William Bowden, Esq;
Richard Fuller, Esq;	George Aufrere, Esq;
Joseph Salvador, Esq;	John Cornwall, Esq;
Michael Adolphus, Esq;	Richard Du Horthy, Esq;
John Martin, Esq;	John Minyer, Esq;
Henry Shiffner, Esq;	Mr. John Pullen
Henry Raper, Esq;	Mr. John Bland, <i>jun.</i>
Charles Dingley, Esq;	John Jackson, Esq;
Mr. S. P. Godin	Capt. Thomas Bennet
Mr. John Lodge	Capt. Thomas Hanway
John De Pontheu, Esq;	Mr. Jonas Hanway.

with Liberty of taking in ten more if they think proper. Of this *Committee*, not less than three Persons act, who meet every *Thursday* at Eleven o'Clock, at the Merchants Seamen's Office over the *Royal Exchange*; and any other Day, if necessary, at the Secretary's House in *Princes-street*, when any two of the Committee may transact the Business which is urgent. Whatever *Regulations* are found necessary from Time to Time are made.

The Clothing given the
Men is

One Felt Hat
One Kersey Pea Jackett
One Ditto Waistcoat with
a flashed Sleeve
One Ditto Drawers
One Pair of Drab
Breeches
One Pair of Worsted
Hose
One Pair of Yarn Hose
Two Shirts
Two Worsted Caps
One Pair of Shoes
One Pair of Buckles
One Pair of Buttons
One Knife
One Pair of Thin Trow-
fers
Thread, Worsted and
Needles
One Bag to put their
Clothes in.

The Clothing and Bedding
given the Lads and Boys
are

One Felt Hat
One Worsted Cap
One Kersey Pea Jacket
One Ditto Pair of Breeches
One Striped Flannel Waist-
coat
One Pair of Trowsers
Two Pair of Hose
Two Pair of Shoes
Two Handkerchiefs
Three Shirts
A Bed, Pillow, Blanket
and Coverlet
A Pair of Buckles and
Buttons
Thread, Worsted and
Needles
A Knife
A Prayer Book and Testa-
ment to those whose
Captains desire them.
One Bag.

Of which a Note is given to every Man, and Boy,
by which he may see what he has; but nothing
is delivered till they are actually on board the
Tender in the River *Thames*, or their respec-
tive

tive Ships at the Ports, except to the *Boys*, and those are attended to their Ships.

I have *farther* the Pleasure to acquaint you, that I have just received Intelligence from *Newcastle*, of the benevolent and judicious Spirit which prevails in that City; that my honored Friends

	1.
William Ord, Esq; has subscribed	— 20
The Dean and Chapter of <i>Durham</i>	— 42
The Proprietors of the <i>Newcastle</i> Bank	20
The Club of Gentlemen at the <i>Turk's Head</i>	20

And there is Reason to believe the same Spirit will be kept up in that City, and extended to other Counties through the Kingdom. Such *ought* to be our particular Regard to every Thing that concerns the Good of Seamen; and this is one effectual Means of diffusing a Patriot Spirit. I hope the whole Nation will catch the sacred Fire, and *save themselves* in Spite of their *Follies* and *Vices*.

The Subscription is every Day producing the happy Effects desired; we have already 900
Boys

Boys, and 400 Men; and for the future, if the Society is supported, I hope to see at least 5 or 600, in a Month; perhaps a greater Number.

N. B. Whatever Monies are paid, are deposited in the Hands of Mess. *Colebrookes* and Co. behind the *Royal-Exchange*; Mess. *Honywood, Fuller* and Co. in *Birchin-Lane*; Sir *Charles Asgill, Nightingale, Ransom* and *Wickenden*; and by Mess. *Martin, Stone* and *Blackwell*, in *Lombard-Street*; Sir *Joseph* and Sir *Thomas Hankey* and Co. in *Fenchurch-Street*; Mess. *Gosling, Bennet* and *Gosling*; Mess. *Hoares* and *Arnold*; Mess. *Child* and Co. in *Fleet-Street*; Mess. *Campbell* and *Coutts*, in the *Strand*; Mess. *Drummond* and Co. at *Charing-Cross*; at whose Offices Subscriptions are received.

F I N I S.

